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EC9915 Canning Meats and Chicken

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

1936 U. of N. Agr. College & U. S. Dept. of Agr. Cooperating
W. H. Brokaw, Director, Lincoln

Extension
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CANNING MEATS AND CHICKEN

While a variety of meat and poultry products may be canned, it is more economical of can or jar space to put up the meat alone and combine it with the other foods at the time of serving. This also permits greater variety in the use of the meat, and combinations with fresh, crisp vegetables as well as a wider choice of seasonings. Onion, garlic, and spices should be used sparingly, and white pepper retains a better flavor than black pepper in meat products.

All meats and poultry for canning should be slaughtered and handled in a strictly sanitary manner. Unless the meat is to be canned at once, chilling the carcass after slaughtering is necessary; otherwise decomposition will start within a few hours. There is little difference in the flavor or tenderness of the canned product whether the meat is chilled or unchilled. However, raw meat is easier to handle after chilling and may be held for a few days until convenient to can.

Frozen meat may be canned, but it does not make a high quality product. If meat has become frozen, do not thaw it out before canning. Cut or saw the frozen meat into uniform strips 1 to 2 inches thick and plunge at once into boiling water. Simmer until the color of the raw meat has almost disappeared; then pack and process.

When glass jars are used, meats should be precooked in the oven or in water before being packed in the container. Frying is not recommended as a method of pre-cooking meat for canning, because it makes the meat hard and dry and gives it a disagreeable flavor.

Precooking in the Oven

Cut the meat into uniform pieces weighing about 1 pound each, and cook in a moderate oven (350°) until the red or pink color of the raw meat almost disappears at the center. This requires about 30 to 40 minutes. Cut the meat so that there are two or more pieces to each container, pack at once closely, cover with the pan drippings or with boiling water; leaving proper head space, and process immediately.

Chicken is handled in this same way except that it needs only about 20 to 30 minutes because of the smaller size of the pieces. This is the best way to pre-cook chicken for canning in glass.

Precooking in Water

Cut the meat into uniform pieces weighing about 1 pound and place in boiling water. Partly cover the kettle and simmer for 12 to 20 minutes, until the color of the raw meat has almost disappeared from the center of the pieces. At this stage the meat has lost about one-third of its original weight because of the juice which has cooked out. At once cut the meat into smaller pieces, pack into the containers, and press the meat down closely with a wooden mallet or pestle. Cover with the broth, leaving proper head space, and process immediately.

This method, commonly referred to as parboiling, is the quickest way to pre-cook a large quantity of meat. It is also used with chicken except that the time is only 8 to 10 minutes.

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Salting

Salt is added to cans of meat as follows: One-half teaspoon to a pint jar, three-fourths teaspoon to a No. 2 can, and 1 teaspoon to a quart jar or No. 3 can.

Directions for Packing and Processing

Beef, fresh--Select cuts of beef commonly used for roasts or steaks--round, rump, loin, rib, and chuck. Cuts that contain more connective tissue and bone may be canned as stew meat, hamburger, or other products utilizing small pieces or used in soups. Wipe the meat with a damp cloth, remove the bone and gristle, and leave only enough fat to give flavor. If using glass jars, precook in the oven or in water, pack into containers, add salt, cover with broth, and process.

Beef, ground (hamburger)--Prepare hamburger by grinding the meat through a plate with 1/8 inch holes. Add 1 cup of salt for each 25 pounds of meat and mix well.

Beef, hash, and stew meat--One way of utilizing small pieces of meat is to can it for combining later with potato in hash. Cut or chop the meat into uniformly small pieces. Add sufficient water to cover, bring to simmering, and cook for several minutes. Pack hot and process.

For use in making stew, cut the meat into 1-inch cubes, cover with boiling water or broth, and simmer until the meat is shrunken and heated through. This requires about 8 to 10 minutes. The color of raw meat will have almost disappeared from the center of the pieces. Pack the drained meat closely into containers, add salt, and cover with boiling concentrated broth. Process immediately.

Beef, corned--Wash the corned beef, cover with cold water, bring to the boiling point and drain. Cover the meat again with cold water, bring to the boiling point, then lower the heat and simmer until the meat is thoroughly heated through. Remove the meat from the broth a piece at a time, and while it is still hot cut into smaller pieces, and pack into the containers. Season the broth as desired, with bay leaves, cloves, or nutmeg. Sometimes gelatin softened in a little cold water is added. Pour boiling broth over the meat to cover. Process.

Pork, fresh--The cuts of pork usually canned are the following: loin, meat from spareribs; head, tongue, and heart in headcheese; loin and lean trimmings in sausage; and liver in liver paste. While the ham and shoulder may be canned, they are generally preserved by curing. Remove excess fat from the meat to be canned and precook by any of the methods described. Pack hot and process.

Pork sausage--Follow any tested formula for preparing the sausage, but omit the sage for that gives the sausage a bitter flavor after processing. See that the seasonings and meat are well mixed together. Mold the sausage into cakes and precook in a moderate oven (350° F.) for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the cakes are slightly browned and the color of raw meat has almost disappeared. Pack into the jars and cover with drippings or with hot water.

Time for Processing Meats and Chickens in Steam Pressure Cooker

Beef (fresh, ground, hash, stew meat and corned), pork (fresh, sausage), veal and boned chicken, are processed at 15 pounds pressure for two hours in quart jars; 85 minutes in pint jars.

Chicken and other poultry (with bones) are processed at 15 pounds pressure for 75 minutes in quart jars; 65 minutes in pint jars.